



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
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## AMENDMENT COVER PAGE - REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL NO:	RM-04-0001 (Posted in FedBizOpps as NIMH-04-DB-0001)
TITLE:	"Molecular Libraries Small Molecule Repository"
AMENDMENT:	Two (2) Dated: February 6, 2004
OMB No.: 0990-0115	<b>PURCHASE AUTHORITY:</b> Public Law 92-218 as amended; <u>Note:</u> The issuance of this solicitation does not commit the Government to make an award, or to pay any costs for the preparation and submission of a proposal.
<b>ISSUED BY:</b> Bruce E. Anderson Contracting Officer Contracts Management Branch NIMH, NIH, DHHS Neuroscience Center Building, 8155 (MSC 9661) 6001 Executive Blvd. Bethesda, MD 20892-9661  <b>POINT OF CONTACT:</b> Bruce E. Anderson E-mail: <a href="mailto:ba9i@nih.gov">ba9i@nih.gov</a> Phone (301) 443-2696 or 2234 Fax at (301) 443-0501 Collect calls will not be accepted.	<b>RFP ISSUE DATE: December 29, 2003</b>  <b>DUE DATE: March 2, 2004 (Unchanged)</b> <b>4:00 p.m., local prevailing time</b>  <u><b>Note:</b></u> The official Point of Receipt for the purposes of determining timely delivery is the Contract Management Branch, NIMH. A <u>paper</u> copy with original signatures is the official copy for recording timely receipt. If the Contracting Officer or Designee does not receive your proposal at the place and time specified, then it will be considered late and handled in accordance with PHS Clause 352.215-10 entitled "Late Proposals, Modifications of Proposals and Withdrawals of Proposals" located in this solicitation. <u>Facsimile submissions are not acceptable.</u>
TO: ALL OFFERORS	<b>PURPOSE: THE PURPOSE OF THIS AMENDMENT IS TO PROVIDE ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RFP RECEIVED TO DATE, AND TO MODIFY THE TECHNICAL EVALUATION CRITERIA.</b>

NOTE: OFFERORS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ROUTINELY CHECKING THE NIMH WEBSITE AT <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/grants/indexcon.cfm> or <http://www.fedbizopps.gov> FOR ANY POSSIBLE SOLICITATION AMENDMENTS THAT MAY BE ISSUED. THIS OFFICE WILL PROVIDE NO ADDITIONAL NOTIFICATION OF ANY AMENDMENTS.

Enclosure: (pages 2-4)

[Questions Grouped by Subject Matter/Task]

### **Task 1. Compound Identification and Acquisition**

**Q.1.** Would you expect for this proposal to include a list of candidate compounds and recommended suppliers, including what priorities & mixture of compounds, natural products and peptide libraries to be included?

**A.1.** As neither the types of assays and targets to be run in the screening centers nor specific compound selection criteria can be specified at this time, we do not require the proposal to include a list of specific candidate compounds, however, some discussion of potential suppliers and the reasons for recommending them could be included as evidence of familiarity with the field. In addition, a discussion of compound selection strategy, including recommended priorities and recommendations for the mixture of compounds, natural products, etc. may provide evidence of experience and expertise in this area.

In this regard, the solicitation Technical Evaluation Criteria, 1. Technical Approach, Criterion (a) Identification, prioritization, and acquisition of compounds from a variety of sources, is modified as follows (**new language is bolded**):

#### SPECIFIC TECHNICAL CRITERIA

##### 1. TECHNICAL APPROACH

55 Points

The technical adequacy, feasibility, and effectiveness of the detailed and specific plans demonstrating knowledge, experience and competence, standard operating procedures, and quality control measures proposed to establish and operate the Molecular Libraries Small Molecule Repository, including:

- (a) Identification, prioritization, and acquisition of compounds from a variety of sources. **Include a discussion of potential suppliers and the reasons for recommending them, a discussion of compound selection strategy including recommended priorities and recommendations for the mixture of compounds, natural products, etc., potential problems involved in establishing a collection of up to 1,000,000 compounds with any recommended solutions.**

### **Task 2. Arrayed Sets and Distribution**

**Q.2.** Will the screening centers/extramural customers be supplied with stock plates or assay plates?

**A.2.** Screening centers will be provided with stock plates. At this time, it is not known what format will be provided to extramural requestors, though it is likely that for the most part these will be the equivalent of screening plates.

**Q.3.** Is the selected contractor able to use the compounds for its own internal research?

**A.3.** As described in Amendment 1, question 20, all parties (including the Contractor) may potentially be granted access to compounds in the library based upon contract resources, the priority given the request, and the overall demand for compounds. The Contractor will not necessarily be granted a special "status" regarding access to compounds.

**Q.4.** Will there be limits in place on how much of a specific compound will be given out to extramural customers vs. screening centers?

**A.4.** Given the potential for the volume of extramural requests to overwhelm the resources of the program, the Government may limit the amount of compound to be provided in response to these requests. Extramural requests for compounds will be evaluated and prioritized, and decisions on which requests will be filled will take into consideration their priority status and the availability of sufficient resources.

**Q.5.** Is it correct to assume that as the compounds arrive, a solution will be made in a micro-tube for replication later? If this is so, then technicians will be needed to weigh thousands of compounds and robotically plate them in a timely way. It appears that more technicians may be required than included in the level of effort chart in the solicitation. Can you please address this issue?

**A.5.** We anticipate the need for technicians to weigh and process the incoming compounds will vary according to the rate of compound accrual. If, for example, a large number of compounds are acquired at once, it is expected that there will be a backlog of compounds to prepare for storage. The Contractor will be required to process incoming compounds in a "reasonable" amount of time, given the level of staffing. The level of effort chart in the solicitation was only provided as a guide, and is not intended to be restrictive for proposals. However, the Government does not want excessive labor effort/costs in order to rapidly process samples, when a lesser effort would suffice.

### **Task 3. Storage and Quality Control**

**Q.6.** Is the repository expected to maintain compounds in dry storage vs. DMSO storage formats? How much leeway is given for the repository to determine the optimal format for storage and delivery?

**A.6.** Offerors should propose their recommendations for this based on their experience and expertise in this area, taking into consideration such factors as the amounts of compounds that may be expected to be handled under this contract, the proposed storage conditions, compound stability, etc.

**Q.7.** Is the contractor expected to Q/C all compounds in-house or will Q/C information from the compound vendor be appropriate?

**A.7.** In some cases QC from the compound vendor may be sufficient, in others QC information may be unavailable or insufficient. Offerors should propose their recommended strategy for QC based on their technical expertise and past experience.

**Q.8.** We would like to better understand the requirement of 90% purity for re-synthesis. Will this number be compound-dependent and determined in discussion with the various committees?

**A.8.** This number will likely be compound dependent. 90% purity is the goal for the majority of the library, but this may not be reasonable for certain compounds due to cost issues or difficulty in synthesizing material at that purity level.

**Task 4. Re-Supply and Re-Synthesis**

**Q.9.** What percentage of compounds is expected to be re-synthesized?

**A.9.** While the exact percentage of compounds that may require replenishment through synthesis is not known, it is anticipated that this will be a small minority of the compounds in the collection, and every effort will be made to ensure that the majority of compounds selected for inclusion in the repository can be replenished by other means.

**Task 5. Informatics**

**Q.10.** We would like to know whether specific details have already become available concerning the new PubChem database. For instance, have the data and transfer formats been established?

**A.10.** The data exchange mechanism we envision is that the repository will periodically prepare data files containing new/changed chemical structure information in a defined format, and transmit them to NCBI electronically by FTP or other means. While the data exchange formats to be used have not been finalized, they will include "industry standards" like SD files, which should be familiar to all applicants. NCBI also plan to work with the repository as necessary, to make sure exchange is working properly.

**Other Miscellaneous Questions**

**Q.11.** Will there be a need for the personnel working on the contract to be part of the NIH email system? If so what specifics can be given to accommodate the contractor employees?

**A.11.** The Contractor will need to be able to send and receive communications via E-mail. We utilize Microsoft Office products (Microsoft Excel or Microsoft Word format for PCs). Internal access to our network as a user will not be available.

**Q.12.** Can you provide more information concerning the propriety nature of information as it relates to the intramural labs and extramural labs compound requests? Is the identity of the requestor and the compound requested confidential, to protect the research directions taken by these centers/investigators?

**A.12.** While final policy on confidentiality and proprietary information has not been set for some aspects of this project, we expect that there will need to be some level of confidentiality regarding requests for compounds from external requestors. Information on the types of assays and compounds screened by the screening centers is expected to be in the public domain.

**[End of Amendment 02]**